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COMMONWEALTH of MASSACHUSETTS:

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BOSTON:

THE LOWER END OF STATE-STREET.

THE POSTS COME TIRING ON; AND NOT A MAN OF THEM BRINGS OTHER NEWS THAN THEY HAVE LEARNED OF ME. SHAKESPEARE.

TO THE RESPECTABLE PUBLIC.

THE PRINTER hereof, begs Leave to communicate, through the Channel of the first Paper of his Paper, his sincere Acknowledgment of the Favors done him by Subscribers to his Work. To give a due Spring to its Success, he is constrained to request the most speedy Payment which they can make, not inconsistent with their Convenience.

Forwarded by proper Encouragement, 'tis his Wish and his Expectation to be, in this Work, not only the Vehicle of the freshest and most authentic News: but, in a Measure, the Promoter of literary Speculation. That whilst even the Villages (he speaks comparatively) of certain States on the Continent—are the Abodes of Genius, and contending, as it were, for the Birth of HOMER—that, at such Time, the Capital of a very respectable Commonwealth, should appear (whether from Negligence or Incapacity, 'tis all one) inadequate to the Purpose of a Magazine or even but a weekly Sheet of Speculation—'tis neither decent, nor of good Report. As there are shining Characters of all Orders and all Professions in this City, the Editor flatters himself that their handing to him, occasionally, an agreeable Tale, or a judicious Tract, an Essay, or a Copy of Verses—will be neither, on one Hand, too great a Sacrifice to Industry; nor on the other, an inconsiderable Profit to the Commonwealth of Letters. To assist us into Wisdom, is the Office and the Honor (and as such, let the latter be ascribed) of all miscellaneous Productions, from the Dissertations Books of CARNAN and NEWBURY, up to the Morals of ADDISON, SENECA and JOHNSON.——Where the Press is free, abuse is, no doubt, always possible—'Tis so with all human Blessings!—To admit the least of necessary Evils then, to qualify and controul the Effusions of Ignorance or ill-Will, that, so often obtrude themselves into good Company, must be the Editor's Lot, as far as the Vigilance and Capacity of himself, and Assistants, will permit.

Touching public News, he wishes for Truth in good Language; and touching literary Amusement, he would endeavour to be classical.

The Printer thinks that he has, by this Time, discovered his Inclination; and, if he is disappointed, it will be for Want of Encouragement.

MR. POWARS,

IT appears to me that the people of Massachusetts must be physicked, well physicked, before their new Constitution will sit easy upon them. That Constitution is, in itself, noble! Beauty and order appear through the whole work. And, I do not say but that the people, at bottom and in heart, are fitted to receive it: but, I want them to RELISH it. Nature has, systematically observed one principle in all her offspring. Love is necessary to preservation. This is the eternal chain which the poet mentions, connecting all below and all above. "The love of our country, as a moral virtue, is a fixed disposition of mind so promote the safety, welfare, and reputation of the community in which we are born, *and of the constitution under which we are protected.*" To fulfil this great duty, we ought to be fitted to the constitution, or, the constitution ought to be fitted to us. To do the latter is to appropriate it to many imperfections; but, to do the former, *is to mend our own manners.* Yes, I repeat it, to *mend our manners.* And mended they must be, or, we are politically undone. I know it is difficult to reverse the inclinations. When a man has long resided at Court, been long versed in genteel hypocrisy, has shaken hands with vice and laid to corruption—Thou *art my sister*—'tis hard for him to expel, all at once, his biasses, and to view, through their proper media, simplicity and virtue. I'll apply this. America had, from her infancy until the present struggle, kept very bad company. Her innate disposition would indeed, at times, break forth into practice, and the genius of her democracy would appear for a season. But, man is an imitative being; his passions are contagious. The customs and the manners, the principles of the British government* penetrated into our favour: and, as our legislative was an exemplar of theirs, so the long train of concomitant excesses was introduced and copied. Of this any one may be convinced who will remember the mode of life when the Commissioners so called, and other British dependants were amongst us. To use a vulgarism, the turning of day into night and night into day, was not the greatest evil which they employed against simplicity, industry and the people's morals. Certain I am that the new invented commodities and fashions imported amongst us, and which were too gaudy for other markets, brought an important revenue, not, indeed, immediately to the British crown, but to individuals of considerable guide in the empire—worse yet, it imposed a disease upon us which has never yet been cured. We have, indeed, thrown off that old government *whose principle was the want of virtue.*† Why then do we not admit with our new Constitution, the principle in which it is founded? Edmund Burke says, that "when the reason of old establishments is gone, it is absurd to preserve nothing but the pretence of them." Absurd indeed! But we are fond of the leeks and onions of our old oppressors. We have a Constitution whose object is the happiness and equality of the people. We have a legislative that is making laws co-incident therewith, and under the same idea. What then? There are those among the people, I mean the vulgar great, who are thwarting the public efforts, by the most unmanly and extravagant exhibitions. The trappings of royalty have, in former days, had too great influence on our *senses.* Too deeply struck with vain display; too fondly attached to those shews which were only made to cover servitude—are there not some among us who continue to enforce by their examples, monarchical customs in a popular government? That season of the year which was heretofore appropriated to such inconsistencies, now returning upon us, induced a well-wisher of his country, and of this city in particular, to suggest, in a loose, miscellaneous way, the preceding thoughts on the propriety of *certain institutions.*

PHOCION.

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* *I do not here mean the principles of that* theoretical *government which appears so beautiful when delineated on paper; but that system of despotism, on which the British have for many years practised.*

† *Baron Montesquieu entitles one of his chapters thus—"That virtue is not the principle of a monarchical government."*

BOSTON, 18th October, 1781.

MR. POWARS,

"FAS EST AB HOSTE DOCERI."

I have extracted the following piece of biography from a British Magazine for the year 1780. Considering from what quarter it comes, I think that the story is as near the truth, and the reflections as near to candor, as could be expected.

AN ACCOUNT OF GENERAL ARNOLD.

THE elevation of obscure individuals always accompanies a time of political distress. At such a juncture, those who possess courage and abilities are generally found ready to seize the many opportunities that offer of advancing their fortunes, and forcing themselves into situations which their birth and education seem to have rendered inaccessible to every idea of hope, which even the most sanguine imagination could form in periods more quiet and less disturbed by the convulsions of national animosities.

The present critical and dangerous conjuncture of affairs has brought into public notice and importance one who, without a military education, has rendered himself formidable as a Soldier; and who (after many marks of contempt thrown upon him while an enemy) is now caressed as a friend to that Government whose distresses he has contributed in a great measure to create, and whose welfare his late conduct will hardly allow him the means of promoting in any considerable degree.

BENEDICT ARNOLD is a name which has been long familiar to the Public. - - - - - - - - -

Mr. ARNOLD was born at Norwich, in Connecticut, about the year 1736. [*The Biographer then proceeds to a detail of Mr. Arnold's origin, parents, friends, and infant character. That detail being too lengthy for our design, and to very little purpose, we come to that Æra of Mr. Arnold's life when he was first known among the military Chiefs of America.*]

About the year 1774, Mr. ARNOLD was, on account of his attachment to the American cause appointed a Colonel by the Assembly of Connecticut.

The activity of his disposition had now full scope to exercise its faculties. Each party had appealed to the sword, and blows only were allowed to determine the rectitude of party measures, and to ascertain disputed rights. In the beginning of the year 1775, he went with a party and scoured the Lake Champlain, with great success and effect. These exploits recommended him further to the Congress, by whom he was promoted to the rank he had received from the Provincial Assembly. His daring and intrepid spirit had pointed *him* out as a proper person to command a separate detachment, and he was soon afterwards chosen to make an irruption into Canada, at the head of 1200 men. This detachment consisted of two battalions under Colonel Christopher Green and Colonel Roger Enos, and three companies of riflemen, making in all 13 companies. They marched from head-quarters at Cambridge, Sept. 13, and proceeding by long and fatiguing journies, in which they experienced hardships of various kinds, arrived on the 13th November before Quebec, which he immediately sat down before, and the next day summoned the town to surrender. Two days after, he was encouraged to continue the siege, by hearing the success of his friend Montgomery at Montreal. On the first of December, that Officer joined him, and they immediately in conjunction raised batteries, and carried on the siege with spirit, depending for success on the weak state of the garrison, and the luke-warmness of the Canadian Inhabitants. The regular troops in the town, under General Carleton, Brigadier-General Maclean, and Col. Caldwell, were only 130 men. General Maclean, who had early seen the danger that threatened Quebec, with the true spirit of an experienced veteran, had collected in the country an excellent body of officers, but had only time to raise 170 recruits, with which he threw himself into the town a day or two before Arnold's arrival. The rest of the garrison consisted of 300 English, Scots, and Irish inhabitants, 700 French inhabitants, and about 500 seamen under Captains Mackenzie and Hamilton of the navy, from two frigates and the merchantmen in the harbour. In this weak state the garrison were, when, on the 31st of December, at two in the morning, the town was attempted to be stormed. Montgomery, who led the attack by the way of Cape Diamond, paraded his men on the heights of Abraham. Arnold, with his two battalions, made his attack by the suburb of St. Rue. Colonel Livingstone, with a regiment of Canadians, and Major Brown, with part of his Boston regiment, were to make a false attack to the southward of St. John's Gate, and to set fire to that place. The different divisions were to move at five o'clock, the wind at that time being east, and a severe snow-storm.—— Livingstone's and Brown's attack miscarried, owing, as they said, to the snow-storm, though the assault had been put off in expectation of that circumstance. At Montgomery's attack, his carpenters soon sawed down the piquets; he and some few more entered, but the rest kept back and did not support them. The barrier and the house adjoining, which they attacked, was defended by a small number of seamen and militia with seven three-pounders. The assailants were immediately saluted with a round of grape-shot and a discharge of small-arms, which killed Montgomery

[*See the last page for the conclusion.*]